REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1, 2, 4-8, 10, 14, and 15 are pending. Claim 3 has been canceled without prejudice and without disclaimer. Claims 1, 4, 7, and 14 have been amended. No new matter has been introduced. Applicants believe the claims comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112.

Applicants note that the feature of adding information of classified defect with information on whether the defect is on optically transparent film or not is illustrated in Fig. 11, as described in the specification at page 17, lines 9-13: "By adding information concerning whether the defects are on the transparent film or the non-transparent film to the defect detection results, an efficient selection of defects that can be targeted by an SEM review is enabled."

Claims 1, 2, 4-8, 10, 14, and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by Admitted Prior Art (APA).

Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 1 is novel and patentable because, for instance, the prior art does not teach or suggest classifying defects according to whether the defect is on an optically transparent film or not. As discussed above, this feature means that an efficient selection of defects that can be targeted by an SEM review is enabled. For at least the foregoing reasons, claim 1 and claim 2 depending therefrom are patentable.

Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 4 is novel and patentable because, for instance, the prior art does not disclose or suggest classifying defects detected by inspecting the semiconductor device according to whether the defect is on an optically transparent film or not, and outputting results of the inspecting of the semiconductor devices by adding information on whether the detected defect is on an optically transparent film or not. As discussed above, this feature means that an efficient selection of defects that can be targeted by an SEM review is enabled. For at least the foregoing reasons, claim 4 and claims 5-6 depending therefrom are patentable.

Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 7 is novel and patentable because, for instance, the prior art does not teach or suggest classifying defects

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detected at the detecting according to whether the defect is on an optically transparent film or not, and outputting a result of the detecting by adding information on whether or not the detected defect is possible to review by SEM based on said classifying. As discussed above, this feature means that an efficient selection of defects that can be targeted by an SEM review is enabled. For at least the foregoing reasons, claim 7 and claims 8 and 10 depending therefrom are patentable.
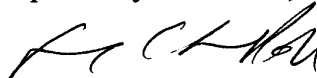
Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 14 is patentable because, for instance, the prior art does not teach or suggest classifying defects detected at the inspecting according to whether the defect is on an optically transparent film or not, wherein the classifying comprises providing information on whether the detected defects are on an optically transparent film or optically non-transparent film. As discussed above, this feature means that an efficient selection of defects that can be targeted by an SEM review is enabled. For at least the foregoing reasons, claim 14 and claim 15 depending therefrom are patentable.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance and an action to that end is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 650-326-2400.

Respectfully submitted,

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